THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Speed restriction on Kadalundi Rail Bridge

2852. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Kadalundi river bridge in Kerala, which collapsed on 22nd June, 2001, should have been replaced some ten years back as per recommendations of safety expert;

(b) if so, whether trains were expected to restrict their speed to 20Km. per hour only while passing over this bridge;

(c) if so, whether these precautions were being taken; and

(d) whether responsibility for this has been fixed and guilty persons have been punished?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Collaboration in Railtel Corporation of India Ltd.

2853. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMARAGARWALLA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the expanded Railway Board has decided to tie-up with Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd., Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd., and Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. as partners for its new venture, Railtel Corporation of India Ltd.;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what are the objectives of the Railtel Corporation of India Ltd.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) and (b) The expanded Railway Board had examined the Detailed Project Report of the Rail Tel Corporation of India Ltd. and *inter-alia* decided:—

(i) to recommend to the Group of Ministers/Cabinet that Rail Tel Corporation of India Limited (RCIL) should induct Joint Venture partner(s).

(ii) RCIL should consider MTNL, VSNL and Railway Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) for Joint Venture (JV) partner(s) for synergy, to start with.

(iii) BSNL may also be kept in view for telecom business for mutual benefits.

These were examined by a Group of Ministers (GOM) and based on GOM's recommendations, the Cabinet decided to approve induction of Joint Venture partner(s) in RCIL keeping Railways equity as 51%. The Cabinet has also decided that initially, PSUs of Department of Telecom and PSUs of Ministry of Railways may be considered for inducting as Joint Venture partner(s).

(c) The objectives of the proposed venture are:—

(i) to expeditiously modernise Railways' train control, operational and safety systems and networks;

(ii) to generate much needed revenues for implementing Railway's developmental projects, safety enhancement and asset replacement programmes;

(iii) to create a nationwide broadband telecom and multimedia network to supplement national telecom infrastructure to spur growth of telecom, internet and IT-enabled value added services in all parts of the country specially rural, remote and backward areas; and

(iv) to significantly contribute to realisation of goals and objectives of National Telecom Policy, 1999.

Accidents at unmanned railway crossings

2854. PROF. A. LAKSHMISAGAR:
SHRI H.K. JAVARE GOWDA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of fatal accidents at unmanned railway crossing in the country, Zone-wise during the last three years and the number of deaths in each case;